



Distilled biosolids and residuals news from New England and Eastern Canada

Late Summer 2022

PFAS Regulatory Activities Continue Apace, Implications for Biosolids Management Unclear

In direct response to the pending implementation of legislation in Maine that prohibits the land application of biosolids and other residuals, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) released a white paper on the critical need to maintain all biosolids management options at this time. According to NACWA's [press release](#):

"Responding to premature policy decisions such as the Maine legislature's complete ban on sustainable land application practices, the paper makes the case that taking any single biosolids management option off the table absent scientific rigor and honest, comprehensive policy assessments will cause serious harm to local communities and could inadvertently cripple the ability of utilities to protect public health and the environment."

The white paper is intended for NACWA members, to assist them in communicating with legislators, regulators, media and the general public about this critical issue.

[Read more...](#)



From the Archives – Flashback to 1997, Could Be 2022

A recent review of NEBRA's library and historical documents has revealed some treasures. NEBRA has nearly 100 documents, reports, and books in its library! One set of documents in particular, dating back to 1997, the year NEBRA was established, could have been written in 2022. Back in 1997, the Part 503 regulations were still fairly new and there were a lot of detractors out there. In particular, the Cornell Waste Management Institute (WMI) in New York came out with a "working paper" titled The Case for Caution: Recommendations for Land Application of Sewage Sludges and an Appraisal of the USEPA Part 503 Sludge Rules in August 1997. The working paper raised many questions about U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)'s risk assessment process, causing consternation for the public and New York State regulators.

[Read more](#)

Compost Facility in Massachusetts Implicated in PFAS Contamination

The *Boston Globe* [reported](#) back in early July on the discovery of elevated levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) impacting 218 properties adjacent to the 240-acre Mass Natural Fertilizer Company site in Westminster, Massachusetts. The PFAS contamination was originally discovered through private well testing.

According to *The Globe* article, the property where Mass Natural operates is owned by Otter Farm, a subsidiary of Seaman Paper. According to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)'s Energy & Environmental Affairs Data Portal ([Energy & Environmental Affairs Data Portal \(state.ma.us\)](#)), Mass Natural was sent a Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) back on May 17th which required Mass Natural to cease sales of all compost materials and do additional testing.

[Read more](#)

Public Engagement: Scaled Up!

By Maile Lono-Batura, Water Environment Federation

During the 2019 WEF Biosolids National Convening, biosolids leaders converged to identify key challenges and concrete actions that the sector could take to ensure biosolids programs remain sustainable. A thread that was clear throughout the Convening was the need to level up our approach to biosolids beyond the status quo as it relates to program management, communication, and research.

Since this Convening, WEF has made strides in the action plan that include:

- Releasing the Biosolids Communication Toolkit
- Hiring a new Director of Sustainable Biosolids Program and part-time Biosolids Coordinator
- Advocating for increased leadership in EPA's biosolids program
- Continuing to advance the Leaders Innovation Forum for Technology (LIFT) program
- Revamping the National Biosolids Partnership to improve accessibility and explore product certification.

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En Bref -- In Brief

Preview of Northeast Residuals & Biosolids Conference in Portsmouth, New Hampshire

The 2022 Northeast Residuals & Biosolids Conference will be in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, **November 1st and 2nd** at The Venue at Portwalk Place. The conference planning committee is made up of volunteers from NEBRA and the New England Water Environment Association (NEWEA)'s Residuals Management Committee. The 2022 conference has lots in store for attendees including a tour of the Dover water resource recovery facility (WRRF) showcasing a new solids handling technology, a panel discussion about master planning, a Shark Tank-type event for new technologies, and of course a celebration of NEBRA's 25th anniversary. There will be an entire session devoted to PFAS and related solids management issues. NEBRA alumni are planning to attend and participate in the 25th anniversary festivities. Registration opens soon – don't miss out! [Northeast Residuals & Biosolids Conference - NEWEA - New England Water Environment Association](#)

WEF Urges Members to Contact Congress for Superfund Exemption

The PFAS Pollution Act, H.R. 2467 which was passed by the House last year, will be considered by the Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works this year. The most significant provision of H.R. 2467 is a mandate to designate PFAS chemicals as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (Superfund). This could have a range of potentially serious consequences for water utilities, especially those that are recycling their biosolids to the soils. WEF is advocating for a legislative fix that explicitly provides wastewater and water utilities an exemption from Superfund liability if PFAS chemicals are designated as hazardous substances under Superfund and opposes legislation that fails to provide such an exemption. WEF has made it easy for members to write their congressional delegation, simply go here: [Federal PFAS Action Alert: Take Action Today! \(oneclickpolitics.global.ssi.fastly.net\)](#)

EPA Publishes a Centralized Database for Thermal Destruction Technologies

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has published the PFAS Thermal Treatment Database (PFAS TT) to centralize information about the effectiveness of PFAS thermal destruction technologies. The database includes over 70 reference publications covering 58 PFAS chemicals. The database has information about the following technologies: calcination, pyrolysis, gasification, granular activated carbon reactivation, hydrothermal processing, incineration, indirect thermal desorption, and smoldering. For more information and to access the database, go to: [About the Database \(epa.gov\)](#).

Opportunities to Advance Biosolids Science -- Help Needed

The **National Collaborative PFAS Project**, being managed by Dr. Ian Pepper, Regents Professor and Director of The WEST Center at the University of Arizona, has raised enough funding for 25 to 30 sites nationwide to be sampled for PFAS. Additional funding is still being sought to increase the number of long-term land application sites being studied. The project is now in the site selection mode and actively seeking recommendations for the study. The sites selected for the study will undergo extensive sampling for PFAS. Soil sampling is scheduled to begin in September 2022. All samples will be shipped to the University of Arizona for PFAS analysis. See PFAS Site Selection Criteria [Form](#) and contact Dr. Pepper (ipepper@ag.arizona.edu) to get involved or to donate to this research project.

There are currently several important biosolids research project underway thanks to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grants from 2021: [National Priorities: Evaluation of Pollutants in Biosolids \(2021\) | Research Project Database | Grantee Research Project | ORD | US EPA](#). These studies will evaluate organic constituents in land applied biosolids and fill the knowledge gaps on the occurrence, fate, transport, and plant uptake of microplastics, PFAS and other organic contaminants in biosolids, soil, water, and crops. Several biosolids-focused organizations, such as the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA), and water resource recovery facilities (WRRFs) such as the Great Lakes Water Authority, are actively involved in these research projects. CASA's Greg Kester is requesting additional WRRFs to join in the study.

Participating WRRFs will be required to complete a brief survey about your facility, provide flow diagrams for liquid and solid streams, and one biosolids sample. To get involved in these research project, contact Greg Kester (gkester@casaweb.org or (916) 844-5262).

August Lunch & Learn to Review Regional Results from National Data Project

This month's webinar will review the development, implementation, and results of the 2nd national survey of Biosolids Regulation, Quality, End Use and Disposal in the United States. Project partners included NEBRA, Northeast Biosolids Association, Mid-Atlantic Biosolids Associations, the California Association of Sanitation Agencies, and BioCycle – as well as numerous [project sponsors](#). NEBRA collaborated with NEIWPCC on northeast survey data and the Lunch & Learn will highlight New England results. With thanks to everyone who contributed, and especially Ned Beecher, NEBRA is proud to house the website (www.BiosolidsData.org) that will remain the premier source of information about biosolids management in the United States for some time to come.

CHECK IT OUT!!

NBC news story about polio detected in New York City sewers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qweTIqccVqQ>

Increasing fertilizer prices driving study of challenges and solutions to the phosphorus crisis: <https://envirotecmagazine.com/2022/06/13/report-is-most-comprehensive-to-date-on-challenges-and-solutions-to-the-phosphorus-crisis/>

Winner of the annual Biodesign Challenge Summit, a [moss](#) that removes microplastics.

Repurposing a sludge ship: [The surprisingly exotic fate of Edinburgh's sludge ship MV Gardyloo - Edinburgh Live](#)

Repurposing a plant-for-alternative-shelter-site: <https://www.reporterherald.com/2022/07/01/city-of-loveland-targets-former-wastewater-plant-for-alternative-shelter-site/>

Win With Water, from Mike Carle of the New Hampshire Water Pollution Control Association: <https://www.nnmunicipal.org/town-city-article/win-water-it%E2%80%99s-dirty-job-someone%E2%80%99s-got-do-it>



Upcoming Events

August 26: Lunch & Learn about National Biosolids Data Project, [Northeast Focus](#)

September 9: Rhode Island Clean Water Association's [Annual Exhibit & Luncheon](#)

September 18-21: Canadian Residuals & Biosolids [Conference](#) (Ontario, Canada)

September 21-23: Maine Water Environment Association's [Fall Convention](#)

September 23: New Hampshire Water Pollution Association's [Fall Meeting](#)

September 25-27: North West Biosolids Association's [Biofest](#) 2022

September 29: Maine Water Utilities Association [celebrates](#) 50 years of clean water progress on the banks of the Androscoggin River

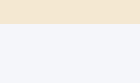
October 20: Connecticut Water Environment Association's [Fall Workshop](#)

October 21 (Noon - 1:30 pm): NEBRA Annual Membership Meeting -- SAVE THE DATE!

November 1-2: NEBRA/NEWEA [Residuals & Biosolids Conference](#) (Portsmouth, New Hampshire)

For a complete listing of Events, go to www.nebiosolids.org/events.

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